

A F E VV
Plain Words

To be considered by those of the

400/53
A R M Y,

Or others that would have a

PARLIAMENT

That is chosen by the voyces of the people,
to govern the three Nations.

Wherein is shewed unto them according to the Scriptures
of Truth, that a Parliament so chosen, are not like
to govern for God, and the good of his
PEOPLE.

Also something to the other part of the Army, and the
New Committee, who turned out, or owes the
turning out of the late Parliament.

From a lover of the Truth of God, and all his Creatures,
GEORGE FOX the younger.

L O N D O N,

Printed for Thomas Simmons, at the Bull and Mouth
near Alderlgate, 1659.



Great are the cryings out of some of you of the Army, and the people of these Nations, concerning the dissolving of the late Parliament, and it appears with a pretence of a very great zeal, that you have for Liberty, Equity, and Justice. and the general good of the three Nations, and you appear in a great fear, that if the people lose the enjoying of Parliaments, that then they shall lose their birth-right and their liberty, both as men, and as Christians; and that equity shall be laid aside, and that the people must be ruled over by a tyrannical power of rebellious men, whose wills must be the Lawes that the people must obey. But you say. if the Parliaments be chosen by the people, then in effect the people makes their own Lawes to be governed by, because they chose their Law-makers themselves; and this is Englands Birth-right you say, and it is just and equall that the people should enjoy it; and if they do not, then the preservation of the people of God you say is lost, and all good government will cease, and the people will be made a prey upon, and so the three Nations will be ruined at once; and therefore seeing such things are like to come to passe, if a Parliament chosen by the people be not upheld, some of you have said, you will assert their Cause to the last drop of your blood.

Ans. Friends, It's good to be zealously affected in a good cause, and its good that the zeal be according to knowledge, & its precious to have the zeal moderated with the wisdom of God; therefore I exhort you in that life & wisdom which is of Christ, my Master, (who came not to destroy mens lives, but to save them) that you would mind the dread & fear of the Lord God, which is the beginning of wisdom, & be moderate, & in coolnesse consider these things which I shall declare unto you, which in waiting upon the Lord, he by his spirit of wisdom & understanding opened in me, concerning the chusing of Parliaments by the voyces of the people, and I know that you who truly desires the good of Gods people, and that mercy & justice might be established by righteous Lawes, (whereby equity and justice might be done unto all without respect of persons) may clearly see with Gods witness in you (which will answer to my words) that you are not like to see your desires fulfilled by a Parliament that's chosen by the voyces of the people; mark the reasons; because the greater parts of the people that are admitted to chuse Parliament men, are such as do not truly desire the good of Gods people, whatever they may profess in words; and therefore it being in their power to chuse whom they will among themselves (as it is)

because most voyces carries it; they will chuse such men, as are like minded with themselves, that's plain and according to the Scriptures, for the world loveth their own, as saith *John*; and now for proof, that the greater part are not such as desire the good of the Lords people, I would have you consider, how that the Scripture saith, that the flock of Christ is a little flock; and Christ saith, *Strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it; but broad is the way that leadeth unto destruction, and many there be that walk therein, and though Israel be as the sand of the Sea; yet but a remnant shall be saved;* now if ye believe these Scriptures, then may you see that a Parliament that is chosen by most-voyses, are not like to act for God, and the good of his people; and it hath been the complaint of the soberest and honestest men in several Counties, when they should have chosen Parliament men, that they could not chuse such a man as they judged would act singly for the good of the people of God and the Country, because they were over-voted by the wild disaffected people, who sometimes have been stirred up by their Priests to vote for such a man as the Priests knew would act for their covetous, oppressing self-interest; and in some places some great proud men who desired to be in Authority, hath feasted the people, and sent gifts to them with flatteries, thereby striving to get the people to vote for them, promising them to stand for their Liberties, when it hath been but to serve their own self-ends and thus the people have been deceived; and if at any time in some Counties and places, the honest sober people have chosen some honest men to serve in Parliament, yet there being to many in the Parliament that have sought their own honour and gain, that such men as were honest, and would have made just Laws, and have acted for Equity and Liberty, they have been hindered; because what is done in Parliament, is done by most voyces also, and the honest party in the Parliament having been the lesser party, have been over-voted also: the light in your consciences will witness that these things are true.

And whereas it is said, *That it is Englands Birth right that the people should chuse their own Law makers.*

I answer, then many thousands of men in England have been wronged of, and kept long from their Birth-right; for such as are not Free men of some Corporations, or have not free land of their own, are not permitted to chuse Parliament men, (mark that) though they be farre more honest and understanding men then many that are free of such Corporations, and have such lands; so that its but a part of the people that

that must chuse Law-makers; and further, he that hath free land worth forty shillings the year in several Counties, he may give his voyce in several Counties where his land lieth, for several Parliament men, when as he that hath land but in one County, cannot have the same priviledge, though he be a far more honest man; and he that's a free-man of that Corporation, that findes a Parliament man, or men; and hath free lands in the country also, he may chuse both in the one, and other; but he that is not free of such a place, he may not have the like priviledge, though he be more honest than the other; and this arose from the same ground, that negative voyces arose from; And it hath been the manner and custome of *England*, to call and chuse many wise men, after the flesh, & many mighty, and noble men (so called) to be Parliament men, that so we see the calling & chusing of Parliaments in *England*, hath bin exactly contrary to Gods calling, & chusing; Read 1 Cor. 1. 26. (& therefore such Parliaments are not like to act for God & the good of his people, but against them) But that which God hath called and chosen, shall confound and bring to nought the wise and the mighty, and the noble things (so called of the world) (and this the Lord will bring to pass) that so no flesh may glory in his presence; Read 1 Cor. 1. 27. 28. 29. And likewise the chusing of Parliament men, according to the custome of *England* (which is called its Birth-right) stands in respect of persons, and not in equality; for the rich covetous oppressing men, who oppreseth the poor, they have the only power to chuse Law-makers, and they will chuse to be sure such as will uphold them in their oppression; and the poor man that is oppressed, though he have no power allowed him to chuse, yet he must be subject to the Lawes which they make who are his oppressors, or else he is accounted a Rebel; so what right think ye is the oppressed like to have, when his oppressors chuse the men that are to be Judges of his cause; and thus the rich men oppress the poor, and draw them before their Judgment seats, as they did in *James* his dayes; *James* 2. 6. These things being considered, ye may see the unequalnesse and partiality that hath been in chusing of Parliaments, according to *Englands* custome, and how unlike it is that a Parliament so chosen should make *England* a free Nation, seeing the great oppressors of the land (*viz.*) Priests, and Lawyers, and the great wicked, covetous, persecuting men are so much concerned in the chusing them; so that if Parliaments so chosen should continue, the people of the Lord are not like to be set free from their oppression, (though Parliaments and Rulers have been made to do many good things by a power which many of them scarce knew) but the

Lord hath a farther thing yet to do in the Nations, then either Protectors or Parliaments would submit unto; therefore the Lord hath thrown them by, but they had first a day of tryal given them, and now is the Lord trying others, and if they will not do his work, in breaking every yoke, and letting the oppressed go free, God will assuredly break them with a greater destruction then came upon those before them; Therefore let your moderation be known unto all men, for the Lord is at hand; and thirst not after blood, lest the Lord give ye blood to drink; and we know that Kings, and Protectors, and Parliaments have made fair pretences, and have given themselves fine titles, and have pleaded that they had a just right to, and a necessity for their authority, and sought to get into the affections of the people by smooth words and large promises, to carry on their own design, but their hearts were not right before the Lord; and therefore he broke them, and their titles; and know that the people that fear God, they matter not titles, and high names, but they look for righteous actions to be brought forth; & many sees that a Parliament that was chose by the most voyces of the outwardly rich people, were not like to act righteously, and therefore they are willing to wait to see what the Lord will do by others, and we see that people have been in great blindness, in contending for Parliaments so chosen; so let this wisdom be learned and lived in, which is better then the strength of fools, who oft perish in their passion and folly.

And now friends in the Army and Committee that have turned out the Parliament, dread ye the Lord God, and mind the equall, just, noble principle of God in you, which hath stirred against tyranny and oppression, and make it not your business to declare onely for freedom, as some before you did, and did not the thing they declared for; but in the fear and wisdom of the Lord, go ye on to act for the good of all his creatures, and seek not your own honours, but singly do the same both for your friends and enemies, that you would have them do for you if they were in authority as ye are; and untill ye come to this, ye are not like to prosper; the Lord abhorreth the lying, flattering, double, deceitful tongue and heart; and the people also have been wearied with fair words, because the actions have been wanting that should have accompanied the said words.

Remember how you have cried out against the oppression of a forced maintenance for teachers, and now ye are tried, and have power given you to break that oppression down, which some of you I say have desired others to do; therefore abuse not your power, but leave the

the people free to maintain their own Teachers; (mark) The Ministers that Christ sends forth, they have no need of you in this particular, as to provide food and raiment for them, for their heavenly Father knowes that they have need of those things, and provides it for them without an outward Law to compell it, that so they lack not any things; and that Teacher that will not consent to this, he serveth not the Lord Jesus, but his own belly; and that is his God; and such a one can never profit the people, and (mark) if ye should take away tythes, & command by a Law any other maintenance from us for Teachers, that would be the same Tyranny and oppression in the nature and ground of it, that tithes were, and we must bear our testimony against it also, and our lives, or estates, or both must yet suffer; therefore if ye do thus, you leave us in the same bondage as before; And let Lawes be provided, that are righteous, just, and equall, according to that of God in the conscience, and let such be impowred to execute them that will hear and determine causes freely, according to righteousness; and let causes of difference between man and man be heard in every County, and when by plain proof of 2 or 3 witnesses (without transgressing Christs doctrine) it come to be manifested who have done the wrong, then let the executioners of the Law be impowred to cause the party or parties, to restore for the wrong that is done according to equity, that so this abominable oppression about the Law & Lawyers may be broken down; and thunder down all ungodly gamings, and shewes, whereby the foolish wilde people are cheated of their monies, and spends away their precious time to the dishonour of the pure God.

And let the people of the Lord have their liberty, to speak his word freely, where and when his spirit leads them and gives them utterance; and let the Law take hold on such as would wrong any mans person or estate.

And let the dread of the Lord be upon your spirits, and wait in his light, to receive his wisdom, that therein you may be ordered in the particular, and in it order all things to his glory, and that ye may remove all that which is standing, which is contrary to the will of God.

And meddle not to establish Religion and Teachers by an outward Law, for verily if ye do, ye will be broken; Let that alone to Christ, whose work it is: Consider all that went before you of late years, that would be meddling with such things, the Lord broke them to pieces, and they were warned in their day, as ye are now. And let not your many victories which ye have obtained, nor your being preserved in so many overturnings (wherein ye have been made Instrumental) nor your strength,

strength, courage, nor wisdom puff ye up; for thus saith the Lord God, even as earthen vessels are in the hands of a Potter, (who have power to dash them one against another, until they be broken, or to break them in pieces with another thing, that appears more weake then they) even so are you in my hand saith the Lord; and I can confound your wisdom, and take away your courage, and smite you with faintness, and dauntedness of spirit in the twinkling of an eye; therefore seek not your selves, for if you do, your day shall be but short.

Remember you of the Army had power once before to have acted for the good of your Nation, but the subtilty in some who sought themselves (whom God hath since blasted) beguiled you, and (mark) some of you sold your power for Commissions, and others for nothing but flattering words, and so betrayed your own integrity, and the cause of your Country; and now you have power again, do not abuse it; serve not the lusts nor the self-interest of any man or men whatsoever, but serve the Lord and your Generation faithfully; mark, if you consent to deceit, and make an agreement with death, through fear or any self-end whatsoever, God will break that agreement, and bring shame upon you for it. And Friends, there is a lofty, proud, self-seeking spirit yet amongst many of you, which if you cease not from, it will be the cause of your destruction; and truly, if you provoke the Lord to break you, it will be more heave & terrible then the breaking of those that were before you; therefore let the Lord be minded, and linger not about things, but be valiant, and act faithfully for the just liberty of all, without respect of persons, and let revenge be forgotten, and this will overcome your enemies, and make you truly honourable in the hearts of all people. This is your day, prize it, And let your deeds make it manifest to the people, that you have not fought your selves, (in this which you have done) but the general good of all, and then you will need the fewer words to prove your enemies lyars, who have accused you to be self-seekers. And now woe is coming both upon Teachers, Rulers and people that are in the good words, but out of the good deeds and life; and the Eternal God who is the light, will break, shatter, confound and over-turn, untill the good life come up and be set on the top of all; and now the name of truth only will be too narrow a covering, for it is the nature of truth it self that will be able to cover, and to be a sure hiding-place in this the day of the wrath of the Lamb.

THE END.

